



# Annual Report for 2020

## Summary

In 2020, the Somaliland Biodiversity Foundation saw steady growth in resources critical to its core goals, developing opportunities for studying Somaliland's biodiversity within Somaliland and promoting sustainable use of its biological resources. It also completely overhauled its website. It now includes a database of articles about Somaliland's diversity, another one listing the species newly described from or discovered in Somaliland since the Foundation was established in addition to past activity reports and newsletters. Unfortunately, the combination of an accident and covid restrictions made it impossible to take items purchased in the US and the UK to Somaliland, the most notable item being a compound microscope.

## Activities

**New Board Member.** In 2020, Mr Steve Jesseph was added to the Foundation's board. Mr. Jesseph has extensive global experience in assisting organizations and industries around the world improve their sustainability, labor relations, human resource management, risk management, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). He brings a valuable perspective to the Foundation's work.

**Museum development:** the museum grew by almost 100 herbarium specimens in 2020, bringing the total number of specimens to 516. Development of the planned insect collection has not yet begun. An account of the 2020 collecting activities is available in Newsletter 8, the English version of which was published in February 2021. Some of the collections, such as that of *Mimusops angel*, are the first report of the species from Somaliland. The revised website (see below) now allows for recording both newly described species and new additions to Somaliland's known biodiversity as they are made.

**Succulent garden.** The succulent garden grew by ?? specimens. One notable addition is a specimen of *Anacampseros*, a genus that has not previously been reported for Somaliland. Its species is not yet known. The specimen in the garden will be examined once it flowers to determine whether it is the species described in the *Flora of Somalia* or a new one.

Two new plant species were described from Somaliland in 2020, *Euphorbia buquensis* and *Ceropegia buraoensis*. The descriptions and some images of the two taxa are not in OpenHerbarium. The keys for the two genera have not yet been revised.

**Teaching.** In preparation for teaching a course in plant taxonomy at the University of Hargeisa in 2021, it was decided to focus on two areas in expanding KeyBase, a website for publishing identification keys, and OpenHerbarium, a website for publishing descriptions and images. The areas were Hargeisa and the area around the caves at Laas Geel. The resulting lists includes 171 species, 115 genera, and 44 families. The descriptions and keys come, primarily, from the *Flora of Somalia*, permission to publish them having been granted by the Trustees of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Three major tasks remained at the ends of the year, adding a key to families and revising the keys for grasses and *Aloe* so that they reflect current knowledge. The course offered will include learning to identify plants using a dichotomous key, hence the need to focus our efforts in building KeyBase and OpenHerbarium.

**Frankincense.** In 2020, the Board agreed that SBF would include working with the [Save Frankincense project](#) established by DeCarlo and Stephen Johnson to promote sustainable management of frankincense as one of its activities. The principles involved in sustainable frankincense growth, such as limiting harvesting to enable continued healthy growth, are equally applicable to other plant species, including those used as browse for livestock.

**The Foundation's Website.** In June, Jesseph pointed out that there were problems with the Foundation's web site. At the time, Barkworth was working with Ali Rezaee, a refugee in Pakistan, on developing another web site (Biodiversity Knowledge Sharing). They switched to working with the Foundation's web site. Six months later it is offering several new resources, including a database of links to articles and books about Somaliland's diversity, provided by Awale and Tomáš Mazuch; a list of species described from or discovered in Somaliland since 2015; posters about Somaliland's diversity, and a synopsis of the Foundation's current activities plus some it would like to expand into.

**Expanding OpenHerbarium.** We continue to use [OpenHerbarium](#), [OpenZooMuseum](#), and [Keybase](#) to share information about Somaliland's biodiversity. In 2020, we focused on adding new collection records to OpenHerbarium and descriptions and identifications for species known from Hargeisa and the Laas Geel area.

We also approached herbaria in Sudan, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya about sharing their records via OpenHerbarium. All expressed interest but, because of a misunderstanding, we were unable to prepare a proposal for funding in time for submission. We are preparing to apply in 2021. As part of our preparation, Helen Pickering and Barkworth posted, with permission, species checklists for the Sudan and South Sudan online. They are based on Darbyshire et al. (2015). Barkworth also posted a checklist of the medicinal plants of Djibouti developed by Abdoul-latif et al. (2018) online. Posting these checklists enhances the ability of OpenHerbarium to serve botanists throughout the region.

**Travel problems.** In late 2019 and in 2020, various items were purchased for use in Somaliland but have not yet been delivered. They include a compound microscope with a built-in camera; 75 metal labels and pens with weather resistant ink for use in the succulent garden; and a book on birds of the world in anticipation of expanding work on documenting Somaliland's bird diversity. The first delay came from Barkworth breaking her ankle five days before her intended departure from the US. By the time she could travel to Somaliland, the pandemic had effectively shut down international travel for the US. It is planned to take the items over in 2021.

### Personnel development

In late November, Faisal Jama enrolled in an online introduction to plant taxonomy class taught from Australia. It will benefit him in teaching the class in Hargeisa which starts in February 2021.

### Budget matters

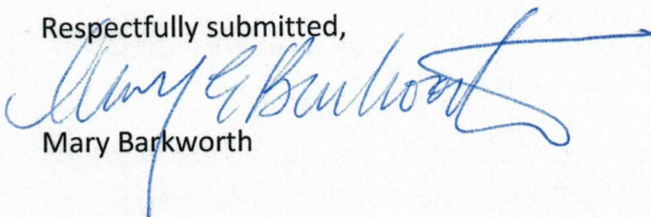
Early in 2020 Barkworth cancelled the Foundation's PayPal account because NeonCRM, the software that duns our organization page, developed to ability to channel donations to the Foundation directly into our US bank account. She had forgotten that PayPal is the mechanism through which Amazon Smile and Zazzle funnel donations. She is in the process in re-establishing the link and ensuring that Facebook is aware of it.

Late in 2020, we were informed that the cost of NeonCRM was to be increased, as would the cost of registration in Somaliland. Consideration was given to switching out of NeonCRM but doing so would be costly, both in money and time. It was decided to make better use of the system's capabilities in future.

### Fundraising

No activities directly relating to fund-raising were undertaken. The Newsletter elicited a donation from one new recipient. It also highlighted some problems in our donation receipt pipeline. These have now been cleaned up.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Barkworth

25 Mar 2021